



# WORLD ANTIBIOTIC AWARENESS WEEK

How can you help avoid the further emergence and spread of antibiotic resistance?

## WHAT IS ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

[Global antibiotic resistance](#) is a growing public health issue. Antibiotic resistance occurs when germs - such as bacteria and fungi - develop the capability to resist the drugs that are designed to kill them.

The spread of antibiotic-resistant infections is only made worse by over-the-counter antibiotics, over-prescription of antibiotics by healthcare workers and incorrect antibiotic usage.

Infections caused by antibiotic-resistant germs are challenging, and sometimes impossible, to cure. In many cases, antibiotic-resistant infections [require](#) invasive alternatives and have a higher mortality rate.

That's why, each year, the World Health Organisation (WHO) conducts World Antibiotic Awareness Week. The aim of this week is to increase awareness of antibiotic resistance, and to emphasise the importance of following best healthcare practices to prevent the emergence and spread of drug-resistant infections.

## HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE?

Misuse and overuse of antibiotics accelerates the rate of antibiotic-resistant infections, so it's vital that we all play a part in preventing this. Here are some steps you can take to reduce the impact and limit the spread of resistance:

### 1. DON'T SELF-PRESCRIBE ANTIBIOTICS

You should only take antibiotics if they've been prescribed by a doctor. Doctors will prescribe you with the correct type of antibiotic (if needed) and tell you how long the course of treatment needs to be. In some cases, the doctor may provide you with alternative treatments if they don't believe you require antibiotics.

### 2. WASH YOUR HANDS

One of the best ways to stop the spread of infection is to wash your hands regularly.

### 3. DON'T SHARE ANTIBIOTICS

Only take antibiotics prescribed by your doctor and don't share them with other people.

### 4. FINISH THE WHOLE COURSE OF ANTIBIOTICS

Always finish the whole course of antibiotics, even if you feel better. If you stop mid-course, the infection can develop a resistance to the antibiotic and spread.

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### Have any questions?

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